

WOMEN  
CANGACEIRAS: A  
ESSENCE  
FEMALE AS  
MATTER OF  
GENDER AND  
SOME FACTS  
HISTORIES  
HAPPENINGS IN  
NORTH EAST  
BRAZILIAN

CANGACEIRAS  
WOMEN: FEMALE  
ESSENCE AS A  
GENDER ISSUE  
AND SOME  
HISTORICAL FACTS  
HAPPENING IN  
NORTHEAST  
BRAZIL

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#### SUMMARY

Mystery lives deeply in the arid and stony crevices of the Brazilian Northeast and it is in this inhospitable, wild and aggressive piece of burning ground that we will go back to the past to understand some social issues that involved the concept of gender and its ideological adaptations. The entry of women into cangaço created new directions, leveraging a new concept. They imposed their own identity, unique personalities. They were persecuted, faced power structures, created survival strategies, influenced attitudes, dictated rules and became respected cangaceiras in the contradictory sexist world of cangaceirismo.

**Key words:** Cangaceira Women. Regional History. North East.

#### ABSTRACT

The mystery deeply inhabits the arid and rocky cracks of the Brazilian Northeast and it is in this inhospitable, wild and aggressive piece of burning ground that we will refer to the past to understand some social issues that involved the concept of gender and its ideological adaptations. The entry of women in the cangaço created new directions, leveraged a new concept. They impose their own identity, unique personalities. They were persecuted, faced power structures, created survival strategies, influenced postures, dictated rules and became respected in the contradictory sexist world of cangaceirismo.

**Keywords:** Women Cangaceiras. Regional History. North East.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, women have occupied spaces and differentiated themselves in their roles, but this was not always the case, women did not have the same rights as men, just to give you an idea, women did not have the right to vote or hold positions in the society. In Imperial Brazil, women were discarded from

social contexts and only in Brazil the Republic began the changes. A classic Brazilian family consisted of a patriarchal family, with the presence of an authoritarian husband, surrounded by slave concubines, who dominated the children, and a submissive, passive, indolent woman, who lived cloistered at home, gave birth to countless children and abused the slaves. Today the situation is different and women have their importance and appreciation, including the date of March 8th dedicated to International Women's Day.

Free and poor women, struggling to survive in São Paulo, crossed public squares and streets without restrictions, gathered at fountains, in washing tanks, or on the banks of rivers, to carry out their work as washerwomen. They were employed as maids, cooks, wet nurses or seamstresses. Sometimes, as street vendors they faced not only hunger, but also the police, bureaucratic regulations and taxes imposed on their tiny commercial activity (HAHNER, 2003, p. 41).

International Women's Day is marked by the story that begins on March 8, 1857, when 130 workers from a textile factory in New York were murdered while fighting for recognition and better living conditions. It took a tragedy for society throughout history to recognize the important role of women.

Thinking about the education of women in Brazil in the 19th century means thinking about a very limited education, which does not go much beyond the universe of literacy. In this sense, it can be said that the education of girls remained extremely behind in relation to that of boys. (HAHNER, 2003, p. 56).

The 20th century went through profound transformations and achievements. Many women went down in history and became symbols that nothing would be the same as before: Right to vote, contraceptive pills, divorce and achievements in the job market and other rights and guarantees.

## 2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

### 2.1 SOME HISTORICAL FACTS REPRESENTED BY MARIA BONITA, THE QUEEN OF CANGAÇO

The most notable peculiarity presented by a psychological group is the following: whoever the individuals who compose it are, no matter how similar or dissimilar their way of life, their occupations, their character or intelligence, the fact that

having been transformed into a group puts them in possession of a kind of collective mind that makes them feel, think and act in a very different way from that in which each member of it, taken individually, would feel, think and act, if they were in a state of isolation. ... The psychological group is a provisional being, formed by heterogeneous elements that for a moment combine, exactly as the cells that constitute a living being, form, through their reunion, a new being that presents characteristics very different from those possessed by each one of the cells alone (*apud* FREUD 1996/1921, p. 83-84).

Societies are governed by established standards of conduct, laws, rights and duties. Notably, demonstrations from remote times served to create controversial characters, both hated and loved, depending on the perspective of those who experienced the extremes of the situation. It is notable to note that the choices of paths taken can be seen as positive or negative paths, depending on the view of those who position themselves outside the situation. The northeastern Sertão has been the scene of unforgettable positions of people who in some way changed their trajectories and involved the lives of other people, with among the facts occurring a pre-judgment of a society that changes its thoughts over time. The Canudos war is the synthesis of a great failure of thoughts in a mistaken society and today attempts are being made to justify the means used, the forms of action and the various analyzes of what at the time was called the Victory of Heroes in reference to the dramatic actions carried out by the army, to the martyrdom of a people who only wanted to prove that a life was possible away from the taxes and duties created only for a less wealthy class, obeying the leader Antonio Conselheiro. Add to this phenomenon Pau - de - Colher, Pedro Batista, Beato Lourenço and the controversial and beloved Father Cícero Romão Batista.

The cangaço phenomenon wrote a different page in Brazilian history than the entire social context of a nation and even today there is a lasting controversy surrounding this event. Despite a large gap regarding a more in-depth sociological study or going deeper into psychoanalytic issues, discussion becomes difficult; facts generated between academics and field researchers, with their minute real details gleaned from oral historiography. It is a discussion that has been going on for a long time and is still difficult to reach a consensus on.

The cangaço was particularly, due to its brutal way of life, an exclusively sexist world. The woman was a discarded figure in this environment. The cangaceiros maintained their sexual relations whenever possible, taking advantage of the dances held during coitus,

ranches, farms, or when they were abused and victims of *GERÁS* (word used at the time to define the practice of rape).

The entry of women into the gangs was seen by some as being the disgrace and decadence of the *cangaço*. For others, women came to appease the murderous fury and formless desire that so hurt and humiliated northeastern families. With the arrival and stay of women, the *cangaceiros* acquired more respect for the defenseless country *caboclas*. Sebastião Pereira da Silva, the famous *Sinhô Pereira*, the only bandit to lead *Lampião*, made the following statement:

I was very surprised when I found out that *Lampião* had allowed women to join the *cangaço*. I never allowed it and never would. After all, Father Cícero had prophesied: *Lampião* will be invincible as long as there is no woman in his band.

What is certain is that *Lampião* went against all expectations and gave in to the invisible traps of love, throwing himself into the beautiful arms and giving himself over to the fiery and seductive kisses of the beautiful brunette, from *Malhada da Caiçara*.

It was in Paulo Afonso that *Lampião* found his great passion, Maria Gomes de Oliveira, the eternalized *Maria Bonita*. She was the first female *cangaceira* and with her she set the precedent for female companies, with Paulo Afonso being responsible for a huge number of women taking part in the *cangaço*. Of the most famous *cangaceiras* that came out of Paulo Afonso, we can mention the following: *Maria Bonita* (the Queen of *Cangaço*), *Lídia Pereira de Souza* (the most beautiful of the *cangaceiras*), *Nenê* (*Nenê*, by Luiz Pedro), *Otília Maria de Jesus* (*Otília*, by Mariano), *Inácia Maria das Dores* (*Inacinha*, by Gato), *Catarina Maria da Conceição* (*Catarina*, by Nevoeiro) and the recently discovered, *Durvalina Gomes de Sá* (*Durvinha*, by Virgínio and Moreno).

With the women came some setbacks, as they did not have the courage and resistance of the men and often got in the way when they became ill or pregnant, with the *cangaceiros* having to constantly retreat during battles to protect the physical integrity of their companions.

According to reports from the surviving *cangaceiras* themselves, the worst thing was having children and not being able to raise them. A mother's love was replaced by pain when she saw her fleshly fruits being placed in other arms. The children were donated, generally to someone they knew who had

conditions to provide a minimum of comfort to the child. A strong report that we have today is that of Inácio Carvalho de Oliveira, Inacinho. Son of the cangaceiro couple Moreno and Durvinha, who was left with canon Frederico Araújo, the religious leader responsible for the Tacaratú church, in Pernambuco.

Inacinho was born in the middle of the caatinga, surrounded by fear of approaching police officers, a birth carried out with essential resources. Given the risk of shootings and the constant crying of the child who could be tracked, the alternative to protect him was handing him over to the Father. A wise and blessed decision.

Inacinho searched for years for his real parents, never losing hope and being rewarded by the couple's reappearance and reunion after seventy long years. Another famous case was the case of Sílvio Bulhões, son of Corisco and Dadá, handed over to Father Bulhões, in Santana do Ipanema, Alagoas.

Maria Bonita also suffered her setbacks, when she gave birth for the first time, she had to be content with the pain of seeing her firstborn being stillborn and having to bury him at the bottom of the yard of the coither who gave her shelter, old Venceslau, Seu Lau, faithful guardian of the routes of the King of Cangaço, near the village of Campos Novos, in Paulo Afonso.

What would apparently be a great life in the women's view, who saw in the cangaceiros something new, an adventure that could bring them benefits, ended up showing the other side of an always troubled life, of fights, escapes, deaths and unrest. Dragging espadrilles without landing properly was a painful task, especially for women who were generally dreaming of the princes that populate their teenage dreams. In the rebellion of young women, many left the warmth of their parental homes to embark on this path of no return. Many others were kidnapped, remembering the case of the cangaceira Dadá who was kidnapped by Corisco, raped and placed under the custody of the bandit's aunt. Dadá left a strong statement reporting that only time healed the trauma of the rape and then, as time passed, she fell in love with Corisco and nurtured the most faithful feeling of love for him, until she died.

With Maria Bonita it was different, she had already been married when she met Lampião and with him she decided to go to the cangaço and from then on the cangaço was never the same, the women brought another face to that world of men only. Much has been written about the Queen of Cangaço, some proven facts and others unproven, and in

At times, irresponsible research was disseminated by writers who wrote fanciful chapters, which only serve to confuse the minds of those seeking real information on a topic that is so debated and little confronted on its oral basis. At other times, deponents lied and deceived writers and readers. The field of research is complex and it takes time and discernment to get closer to the concrete bases, looking for the smallest details of the statements made by the interviewees, listening to as many people as possible who saw or experienced the scenes, in the search for an approach to veracity.

[...]Is masculine nature the correlate of violence, cruelty, unlike feminine, maternal nature? There are so many reports that the entry of Maria Bonita into Cangaço, of more than 60 women, would have humanized, feminized “the empire of machismo in the backlands” that we could assume so.

Well then. There are several reports of episodes in which Maria Bonita intervenes in moments of fury and cruelty on the part of her beloved. One of them described by Melquíades da Rocha, present in the book about Maria Bonita by João Lima. This is the moment when Lampião had captured, in 1935, in Forquilha, now Paulo Afonso, Manoel Cândido, prosecutor of the District of Água Branca, in Alagoas, and was already preparing to spear him, piercing his chest with a sharp dagger when he begged Maria Bonita not to do it, as he had a six-year-old daughter who depended on him. At that moment Maria Bonita asked her lover to avoid such a misfortune, as she only remembered her little daughter (Expedita) who she had also left in Jeremoabo. The enraged Lampião, touched by the pleas of the woman he loved, did so.

Is it invalid, then, to say that all cangaceiros have a perverse structure? That the violence committed by them, in the name of the ideals they possessed and fed upon, is the trace, the letter, the mark of this perversion? It must be clarified that it is not just the perverse structure that enjoys perversion, since it is possible to identify it as traits in other structures.

Marcela Antelo, an Argentine psychoanalyst based in Bahia, says that “the central lack that castration introduces can be represented by the gaze”, as Lacan establishes. She further problematizes this issue by stating: “we are born being seen and it is this look that escapes our field of vision. Perversion constitutes the attempt to see what is impossible to see. The denial of this impossible constitutes the passion of the subject of perversion” ... (Dr. Juracy Marques – 2012- Different Contexts involving the life of the Queen of the cangaço).

## 2.2 MARIA BONITA: A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Maria Gomes de Oliveira was born on March 8, 1911, on the Malhada da Caiçara farm, district of Santo Antonio da Glória do Curral dos Bois. Since July 28, 1958, when Paulo Afonso was emancipated from Glória, the village of Malhada da Caiçara remained on land belonging to Paulo Afonso. Maria Bonita was the second daughter of the couple José Gomes de

Oliveira, known as Zé Felipe and Maria Joaquina Conceição Oliveira, nicknamed Dona Déa.

He had ten other siblings: Benedita Gomes Oliveira, Joana Gomes de Oliveira (Nanzinha), Amália Oliveira Silva (Dondon), Francisca Gomes Oliveira (Chiquinha), Antonia Gomes de Oliveira, Olindina Oliveira Santos (Dorzina), Ozéas Gomes de Oliveira, José Gomes de Oliveira, Arlindo Gomes de Oliveira and Ananias Gomes de Oliveira (Pretão). His main friend was his cousin Maria Rodrigues de Sá. She was married to José Miguel da Silva, known as Zé de Nenê.

She joined the cangaço at the end of 1929 or beginning of 1930. She was the first woman to be part of a group of cangaceiros. She died on July 28, 1938, along with Lampião and nine other companions, in Grota do Angico, in Poço Rodoni, Sergipe.

### 2.3 MARIA BONITA DRIVER

Regarding the recorded facts that point to Maria Bonita dominating the steering wheel of a car, there is very little information and many doubts, due to the lack of witnesses to such unusual events. In reference to the written reports, we can mention the book: Lampião: As Mulheres e o Cangaço, pages 217 and 218, 1 edition, from 1984, authored by Antônio Amaury Corrêa de Araújo and which we transcribe in full:

Leônidas told us that there was a Ford car on the Cuiabá farm (belonging to the powerful Brito family, land owned by engineer Hercílio Brito), from 1924 or 1925, something like that, and that when Lampião's group stayed there, Maria Bonita drove that vehicle."

They would gather together some companions and it would go off in fits and starts, along the farm's internal roads, with everyone jolting as the car rocked, like a boat in a rough sea, along the potholed and stone-strewn road. The goats screaming, laughing and swearing. Women calling out to the saints of devotion, giving hysterical screams, asking the apprentice driver to be careful

I have never heard references to such a detail from any member of the people of Lampião. Neither women nor men. "We give the information with due reservations and relying on the words of our dear Leônidas, who says he witnessed such scenes"...

We also found a quote about Maria Bonita's automobile skills, in the book "Quem Foi Lampião", authored by Frederico Pernambucano de Mello, page 108, transcribed here, also, in its original form:

Near the old village of Pau Ferro, today Itaiba, Pernambuco, Maria Bonita learned to drive in the vehicle of the municipality's political leader, Audálio Tenório de Albuquerque, coming to completely master the function, according to what we heard from the politician's driver, Antônio Paranhos, who he served as teacher, with Lampião's agreement (MELLO, 2005, p.108).

The facts listed above were not commented on by any of the former members of the cangaço, making it even more difficult to gather information and investigate the details further. In the two transcriptions of the books, there is no confirmation of the reports from any component. Interestingly, the reports were made in different states, different municipalities and on different occasions and always stated that the learning had been done in the aforementioned places.

The difficulty in elucidating the case in question, as it is not supported by eyewitnesses belonging to Lampião's gang, is based on isolated reports collected by two of the greatest writers on the cangaço theme, Antonio Amaury Correa Araujo and Frederico Pernambucano de Mello, serious researchers and who transcribed reports from people who said they had seen the scenes. The writers relied on the explanations of a former driver and Leônidas Fernandes dos Santos, highlighting that Leônidas was the same one who invented the lie that Maria Bonita had cheated on Lampião with the man she most trusted, the bandit Luiz Pedro.

These narratives are made known to the public using the credibility of the two aforementioned writers as a shield. It is almost impossible to know whether the stories really happened or whether the statements were created by their witnesses.

#### 2.4 MARIA BONITA: HER BEAUTY AND TEMPERAMENT IN THE VIEW OF COMPANIONS AND CURIOUS

Lacan, in his Seminar on Anguish (2005) says that: If there is one thing we know about the perverse, it is that what appears externally as an unrestrained satisfaction is a defense, as well as the exercise of a Law, insofar as it restrains, suspends, stops the subject on the path to jouissance.

Maria Bonita's beauty and difficult temperament have long been discussed. Despite the large number of photographs found with the figure of the Queen of Cangaço, we are

always questioned and asked to give definitions about the cangaceira's physiognomic and sculptural features.

The surviving cangaceiros, when gathered in conversations or asked to give information about the exploits experienced in the cangaço, naturally tend to report and discuss the harmonious traits of the cangaceiras and in particular the traits of Maria Bonita, as well as her behavior, sometimes complicated. A curious fact is that many of the survivors from that time claim that the most beautiful cangaceiras were Lídia de Zé Baiano, Durvalina de Virgínio, Maria de Pancada and Nenê de Luiz Pedro, relegating Maria Bonita to a level beyond this first qualification.

The cangaceiro Balão, father of thirty-eight children, these fathered by different women, was then knowledgeable about the feminine product, having even had some romantic encounters with Maria de Pancada, possessing her several times, in a single day, while they were on a trip, at the time still wearing the blue blend of cangaço. Despite men's refined tastes, everyone has their own choices and visions. About Maria Bonita, Balão gave the following definition: "She was short, a little cranky and with a flat bottom"!

Dadá commented on Maria's beauty without first mentioning the perfection of Lídia and Durvalina. The crudest report about Maria Bonita was made by the writer and former police officer, Joaquim Gois, who says he met the bandit when he was at Maria's house, back when she lived with the shoemaker Zé de Nenê, place where Joaquim had gone, together with Sergeant Manoel Rosendo, with the intention of ordering some leather artifacts. Joaquim Góis shows his antipathy towards Maria Bonita, where he gives the following report:

... Character exaggerated by popular fantasy elevated to the heights of a beauty that she did not possess, within the halo of a false romanticism that the absence of physical gifts so far distances from the love legend that her interest in Lampião created and spread, Maria Bonita, under the spotlight of a serious, dispassionate criticism loses the place to which it has risen in the imagination of the simple people.

In the credulous and moved invention of ignorance, his name lit up with sympathy and enthusiasm.

A myth that does not last, because it has long roots in superstition or in the naive lies from which popular belief builds its idols.

... , but the story, which is inflexible, dethrones this improvised heroine, placing her in the common place of ordinary women whose foolishness and adultery changed their destiny.

To better portray her, without retouching, in the vision of her mixed-race soul, without the golden frame made by the easy resources of fantasy, it is convenient to see her in the cheap plot of her separation from her husband.

Analyzing the facts: This is the information provided by Joaquim Góis, with which I disagree based on the following analysis: How is it possible that Joaquim Góis met Maria Bonita alongside her husband in 1932 (the year in which the aforementioned writer was hired by the forces steering wheels)? Why this question? Since the end of 1929 or the beginning of 1930, Maria had accompanied the great cangaceiro leader and never returned to his home, in the village of Malhada da Caiçara, in Paulo Afonso, making it, therefore, impossible to have been analyzed in such detail, at his residence. , by Joaquim Góis.

The filming and photos taken by Benjamin Abraão are records that prove that Maria Bonita was not a dull cabocla. It is easy, in a visual analysis, to observe the features of the face, the perfection of the lips, the contours of the legs.

A matter of taste is individual, this discussion will be eternal, the photographic archives are there for individual analysis.

## 2.5 THE MEETING OF LAMPIÃO AND MARIA BONITA

Maria Bonita's sister, Olindina Oliveira Santos, known as Dorzina, was the one who gave the best information, saying that the first times Lampião set foot on the lands of Malhada da Caiçara, Maria Bonita was not at her parents' house but at her father's house. husband José Miguel. Former cangaceira Dadá, speaking more than once with Antonio Amaury, said that Dona Déa had facilitated, in every way, her daughter's meeting with Rei do Cangaço.

On one occasion, the "Gomes de Oliveira" residence, receiving a visit from the Lampiônico group, was surprised by the arrival of a cousin of Maria Bonita, who had come to visit his relatives.

When the darkness of the night approached, the boy tried to return and had his intention blocked by Lampião, being prevented by the bandit who demanded that he sleep there, fearing that the skittish bandit would be denounced by the young man.

That night Lampião slept on top of the table and Maria Bonita's cousin below. Lampião always passed his hand under the table to confirm the young man's presence. The boy suffered from bronchitis and as he didn't want to bother the cangaceiro, over the hours the desire to cough passed and was always suppressed, making that night a torment.

for the patient. At daylight, the cangaceiros prepared to travel and released the patient. The curious thing is that after this episode, the young man was cured of his old bronchitis. Holy medicine!

According to Antônio Marques da Silva, Antônio, from Jacó, his uncle Elias Marques da Silva, patriarch of the family, also got to know the famous cangaceiro when he started to frequent the Santa Brígida region. The fact that he was a friend of Zé de Filipe's family must have facilitated this acquaintance between Lampião and Elias, which even resulted in Elias Marques helping the bandit group for some time. Later there was a disagreement between them and they started to hate each other. This momentary friendship between Lampião and Elias allowed Antônio de Jacó to learn about the beginning of the relationship between Lampião and Maria.

What Antônio narrated, combining it with other information, we arrived at the following frame:

Lampião's first visits to Malhada da Caiçara were quick visits in which he received food, water and shelter. On one of these visits, the cangaceiro leader met Maria, his married daughter who lived close to the place and because she was at odds with her husband José Miguel da Silva, a common situation between the two, she was at her parents' house. Several testimonies from people at the time, many still alive, confirm that Lampião met Maria Bonita, through her uncle, Odilon Café, a rich man who lived in the neighboring town of Sítio do Tará.

Fate meant that at this moment of separation between Maria and José Miguel, Lampião's group arrived at the scene. It was the bill! From acquaintance to dating was a step, mainly because the girl's mother gave full support to her daughter's relationship with the bandit. Repeated visits caused disruption to the family.

## 2.6 MARY IN THE CITY OF BEMBOM

Referring to the book: Lampião, by Ranulpho Prata, first edition, in a photo inserted between pages 180 and 181, portraying the family of José Gomes de Oliveira, father of Maria Bonita, they found the following caption (following the caption of the time): "Fathers and brothers of

Maria Déa, lover and companion of “Lampião”, who stood out in the blood of the Bembom village, according to the testimony of Colonel Antônio Nunes, seeing herself as one of the victims”.

In order to clarify the facts, in January 1977, Antonio Amaury, in the company of his wife René Maria, were at the place where such an episode would have occurred and discovered that the closest approach to the King of Cangaço happened on the other side of the São River. Francisco, in the town of Oliveira, town of Sento Sé, opposite Bembom, today both flooded by the Sobradinho plant. Oliveira, located on the right side of Rio and Bembom on the left bank. When the cangaceiros attacked a commercial house in Oliveira, after being looted, it was set on fire, with black smoke rising into the air, seen from Bembom.

The information, also published in newspapers, places Maria Bonita as the alleged perpetrator of bleeding on a victim residing in the town of Bembom, where she allegedly bled a local person and then licked the blood that ran from her dagger. It was with the intention of confirming this act or not, that Antonio Amaury Correa de Araujo was in this town and upon arriving, he sought out former residents of the town and obtained confirmation from Messrs. José Marcelo de Souza and José Guedes that Lampião had never been there. there.

Mismatched or sometimes malicious information served to blame innocent people, fantasize a story or try to magnify articles from people who lived dependent on lies, in an attempt to obtain recognition through the news.

## 2.7 THE QUEEN SHOT

At dawn on July 20, 1935, a month of June festivities and abundance at the country table, Lampião's band arrives in the village of Serrinha do Catimbau, district of Garanhuns, Southern Agreste of Pernambuco. Colonel Zezé Abílio was the one who provided security to the cangaceiros when they were in the vicinity of Bom Conselho, Águas Belas, Itaiba and in parts of Agreste in Pernambuco. The visit of the King of Cangaço to Serrinha finds two versions in the historical annals, the first that he had gone to get ten contos de réis with Mr. Chiquito. The second version and the most likely is that Lampião asked some acquaintances of his to organize a dance. The idea of the ball was not accepted by João Caxeado, Quarter Inspector and local merchant. The reaction of João Caxeado, Oséas Correa, João

Bezerra and other people from the locality were filled with apprehension and terror, as they soon learned that the group had murdered Mr. José Gomes Bezerra, on the Queimada do André farm, six kilometers from Vila de Serrinha. The news of Zé Gomes' murder arrived like a flash of lightning. Some information makes it clear that José Gomes' death occurred as a result of settling accounts between him and Zezé Abílio, in addition to the fact that Zé Gomes allegedly confronted the King of cangaço with words, signing his death sentence with his ignorance.

Faced with the news of Zé Gomes' death, João Caxeado organized a small group to defend the place and its people. From Queimada do André, the small group of Lampião, Maria Bonita, Medalha, Fortaleza, Gato, Moita Braba, Maria Ema and Maçarico march to Serrinha. Several residents, frightened by the approach of the cangaceiros, fled. The few men who remained in the city organized the reception for the captain and his group. When heading to Chiquito's residence where he was perhaps going to collect the ten contos de réis, the King of Cangaço was greeted by a hail of bullets, the first shots hitting Maria Bonita, who was wearing a white dress with polka dot details. The color white had become an easy target to see. Lampião, faced with the situation, returned fire and took action to help his beloved. The Queen of Cangaço was shot once in the back and another in the buttocks (according to the testimony of the cangaceira Dadá, from Corisco, Maria Bonita, after this wound she started coughing up blood and went to be treated in Propriá).

The dog that had the nickname Dourado fell on Rua de Serrinha riddled with bullets. The cangaceiros gave up the attack. During his escape, Lampião took a boy known as Zé Tutinha to help carry Maria Bonita in a hammock. The gang headed towards Serra do Ermitão, from there they headed towards Serra do Tará. In Tará, Mr. Antonio das Guaribas provided first aid to the shot Queen. Lampião swore to return to Serrinha and take revenge, especially on João Caxeado, Chiquito and Zé Birunda.

His revenge did not materialize, as he was advised by Colonel José Abílio not to take such revenge. João Caxeado spent almost a year waiting for Lampião's revenge. The inhabitants of Serrinha only had peace of mind when Lampião died in 1938. Zé Tutinha, the network carrier, reportedly said that Lampião was muttering through gritted teeth: "Traacherous! Cowards! That's why it's not worth treating these people well!" Lampião was banging his jaw with so much hatred at the betrayal of his possible allies and, indignant, he told the

network charger: "Tell those favas that I'm going to call Corisco and that he gathers his boys that one day I'll return to Serrinha and I swear that I'll leave the village on the pile of dirt, my revenge is limitless". About this episode There is a case against the cangaceiros that took place in Serrinha and which is transcribed, in parts and with the original spelling, below:

"COURT OF LAW OF THE DISTRICT OF GARANHUNS, STATE OF PERNAMBUCO" 1935, Distribution N°795 – 3rd Notary's Office, n° 85  
CRIME SUMMARY, due to a complaint by the Public Prosecutor against Virgolino Ferreira, alias Lampeão; Natalício de Tal, commonly known as Fortaleza or "Cabo Velho"; Medal, Maçarico or Juriti, Gato, Moita Braba; denounced as being subject to the sanction of art.268 with 18 s 1 of the consolidation of Penalty Laws.  
The Clerk Josaphat Pereira

#### SELF-ACTION

On the eleventh day of November, in the year nineteen hundred and thirty-five, in this city of Garanhuns, State of Pernambuco, at my Notary's Office, at Rua Santo Antonio, 497, I signed the complaint petition and the police investigation, which Hereafter, you will find that, for the record, I made this term. I, Josaphat Pereira – clerk and typed and signed.

Agostinho Barboza de Lima, sixty-four years old, married, farmer, son of Jacinto Barboza Maciel, knows how to read and write, born in this State, resident on Rua de Serrinha, said that he declared the following that in the early hours of the twentieth of July, at around three o'clock he was warned that the group of bandits, led by Virgulino Ferreira (aka "Lampião") was coming to attack this Villa, that the declarant arranged to hide his family, which is when the group returns from hiding and enters the street, that when the declarant was talking to Miguel Pereira dos Santos and Floriano Duda da Costa, ten bandits put their weapons on him and said to the declarant and his companions, don't move, I don't want any changes, there is nothing here, and they asked, are there soldiers here?, to which the declarant replied that there were none, they also asked, are there people with rifles? The declarant replied no, that Lampião asked who the boss here is and the declarant replied that he is Inácio Bezerra, that Lampião ordered Floriano Duda to go and call Inácio Bezerra so that he could get here, I want to make an agreement with him, that Floriano Duda

..... to take off because it was to make it easier with Inácio Bezerra that Lampião told Manoel Pereira you to get along with him that Manoel Pereira said he would do it, say "Lampião" so go call him and Manoel Pereira following "Lampião" said let's all go, that we all went together to the door of Inácio Bezerra's residence, and when Manoel Pereira arrived, he knocked and called, but was not answered; that "Lampião" said let's go to Chiquito's house, that when we arrived at the door "Lampião" started knocking and calling Chiquito, Chiquito, that Manoel Pereira said to "Lampião" these families have already run everything, that "Lampião" said that they have run everything fire already in this shit, that's when the first shot came out that injured the bandit, who is lying on the wall unable to speak, that "Lampião" asked her were you the one who shot, and she replied, twisting, I'm injured, what a "lampião" he shouts to the goats in the rear and start fire, that the declarant seeing the shooting ran and saw nothing more, and there being nothing more nor being asked of him, the declaration ended, which after being read and acclaimed as signed by the authority by the declarant and by me scribe who wrote it.

João Antonio da Silva  
Agostinho Barboza Lima  
Jucir Penha

Afterwards, Floriano Duda da Costa, forty years of age, married, marcher, son of José Celestino da Costa, knows how to read and write, born in this state, resident on Rua de Serrinha, said that he declared the following:

that in the early hours of July 20th, around three o'clock, he was warned that the group of bandits led by Virgulino Ferreira (aka "Lampião") was attacking the agents and heading towards this old woman, who the declarant had... left informing his family, who, after finishing his mission, met with Manoel Pereira dos Santos and with him was Agostinho Barboza de Lima, who, having a small talk, is when he comes The group arrived and they soon approached the declarant and his companions, who upon arriving together, grabbed the declarant's arm and asked who it was, to which the declarant replied that I was a small marcher and that the bandit was caught. The shit was left behind so that the bandit, seeing a figure, bent down to see who it was and told the figure to come here and here it is. . . . . and no, when she saw the figure, she said if she runs, I'll shoot, and she gets shot in return, and "Lampião" asked her, it was you Maria who shot, she replied, I'm shot, and he's catching the bandit. ....from the sidewalk below and there saw gunfire, which the declarant proceeds to escape and knows nothing more. And knowing nothing more or being asked, the declaration was finally made, which after being read and found to be in conformity, signed by the authority by the declarant and by me, the clerk who wrote it.

João Antônio da Silva  
Floriano Duda da Costa  
Jucir Penha

In addition to this description set out above, there is also a bundle of paper, with 39 pages, where the following are heard: Manuel Herculano do Santos, Celestino Bulandeira dos Santos, Cirático Lyra dos Santos, José Correia da Silva, Inácio Bezerra de Assunção, João Antônio da Silva , Manoel Jacob de Noronha, Aureliano Januário de Souza, Luiz Alessandro de Noronha, José Alessandro de Noronha, Antonio Vicente Ferreira, Luiz Gonzaga da Costa, and the witnesses Euclides José dos Santos, Venâncio Bulandeira dos Santos and Maurício Francisco da Silva.

Then comes the following order:

COURT OF LAW OF THE DISTRICT OF GARANHUNS, STATE OF PERNAMBUCO

*Mandate*

*Dr. Edmundo Jordão de Vasconcellos, Judge of the District of Garanhuns, State of Pernambuco, by virtue of the law, etc.*

I ORDER any of the officers under my jurisdiction, who, in compliance with the present, signed by me, direct the Villa de Serrinha of this municipality, and, therein, summon Manoel Costa Filho, Salustiano Bazílio da Silva, Pedro Baptista de Azevedo and Miguel Fabiano de Azevedo to, as witnesses to the criminal proceedings brought against Virgulino ferreira, aka LAMPEÃO, Natalício de Tal, aka FORTALEZA or CABO VELHO, Medalha, Maçarico or Jury; Cat;

Moita Braba, denounced as violating the sanction of art. 268 comb. With the 18th 1st of the consolidation of the Penal Laws, appear on the 16th of the month, at 2 pm, in the hearing room of this court, in order to testify what you know and what is asked of you, under the penalties of the law. The defendants are cited and Dr. Prosecutor. FULFILL YOURSELF. Given and issued in this city of Garanhuns, on January 8, 1936. I typed and subscribed.

Josafá Pereira, criminal clerk  
Edmundo Jordão, Judge of Law

Attached to the statements is a personal injury examination guide with the following information:

**POLICE DELEGACY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF GARANHUNS  
CARNAL VIOLENCE**

Examination report carried out by: Antonia Avelina da Conceição. On the thirty-first day of August 1935, in this city of Garanhuns and at the Police Station, at 2:30 pm, before Capt. Miguel Capt. Manoel..... .. Cabral, with me appointed as clerk of his office, the appointed and notified experts Dr. Paulo .....and Tavares Correia attended

The witnesses also notified José da Silva Maia, Gerson Souza..... ordered the experts under oath of office to carry out a medical examination in the person of Antonia Avelina da Conceição and answer the following questions: 1st if there was deflowering ; 2° what method is used; if there was carnal copulation; 4° if there was violence for a libidinous purpose; 5° what means were used, whether physical force or other means that would deprive the woman of her faculties and thus of the possibility of resisting and defending herself.

As a result, the experts began to carry out a medical examination on the person of Antônia Avelina da Conceição, on August 31, 1935, at 2:30 pm, at the police station, white, regular height, natural from Pernambuco, .....years old, residing in the District of Serrinha, with a strong constitution, calm and constant temperament.

In the Judiciary diary of November 1935, the following quote appears:

Court of Law of the District of Garanhuns

**CITATION NOTICE**

Doctor Edmundo Jordão de Vasconcellos, Judge of the District of Garanhuns, State of Pernambuco, by virtue of the law, etc.

MAKE VIRGULINO FERREIRA, aka LAMPEÃO, known; CHRISTMAS OF TAL, aka FORTALEZA; or CABO VELHO; MEDAL; TORCH or JURITY; CAT; MOITA BRABA; that the public prosecutor of the district denounced them as incurring the sanction of article 268 combined with article 18 paragraph 1 of the consolidation of criminal laws, and that the denounced people are in an uncertain place and not known by the present notice of summons with the period of twenty (20) days, counting from the date of publication, I call them, cite them and hereby summon them to appear before this court, in the courtroom, in the said period, in order to assist in whatever is in the good of their rights, including interrogations under penalty of absenteeism. And so that the said complaints are made known, I sent this notice that will be posted in the usual place and published in the STATE GAZETTE.

Given and issued in this city of Garanhuns, on the 14th day of November 1935. I typed and subscribed.

Josaphat Pereira.

Clerk.  
Edmundo Jordão  
judge of law  
(S. crime)

## 2.8 A WORLD OF LIES AND STORIES CREATED BY IRRESPONSIBLE OPPORTUNISTS

Untruths haunt the cangaço world as if they were tattoos embedded in the epidermis of history, imaginary facts are taken as true and propagated with lightning speed. There are always crazy people who want to sell lies as truth and if readers and scholars do not know the real facts, they become agents propagating irresponsible statements that lack analysis.

During Seminars and conferences, during lectures and round tables, it is almost a rule to ask if Maria Bonita cheated on Lampião, if there were homosexuals in the cangaço, if Lampião threw little children in the air and parried them with a dagger, if Lampião had a rule of murdering all country people. that he found ahead. Not to mention that some claim that Lampião did not die in Grota do Angico, in Poço Redondo, Sergipe. He was seen in Goiás, Minas Gerais and Acre, being a large farmer. Every now and then someone appears wanting to pretend to be cangaceiros, as was the case with the appearance, in 1984, of a supposed Ezequiel, Lampião's younger brother, who appeared in Serra Talhada, Pernambuco and spent more than twenty days wandering around the city saying that He was the brother of the King of Cangaço. The real Ezequiel died in the town of Baixa do Boi, in Paulo Afonso, Bahia, hit by a machine gun fired by Lieutenant Arsênio de Souza, near Lagoa do Mel, a tank built by Antônio Chiquinho (still alive while writing this text, in 20 January 2010, aged 104 and still lucid). Not to mention that the lying Ezequiel was unmasked and recognized as being a seller of string. Another impostor was unmasked by Zé Sereno and Sila, while they were appearing on a radio program in São Paulo and there someone appeared claiming to be a bandit that Zé Sereno knew well. The impostor had to be protected so as not to be beaten. A similar case happened in Paulo Afonso when I found out that Moita Brava was alive and went to interview him. The man considered himself one of Lampião's greatest friends and when I asked the supposed bandit's date of birth, he replied: 1940, April 25,

1940 to be more precise. When I asked him how he could be friends with Lampião, having been born in 1940 and Lampião died in 1938, the man broke down and the conversation ended there.

The questions are diverse and many claim that the stories are true, as they have read books about cangaço, by the way, irresponsible books and authors, who confuse the minds of those interested in knowing a little about history and a time. With the Queen of Cangaço it couldn't be any different, conversations take place placing her as the lover of the Englishman who spent some time with Lampião, an Englishman who is the result of a fictional character created for the film *Lampião e Maria Bonita*, on Rede Globo de Televisão. Maria would also have an affair with Sabonete, a cangaceiro who would be an Honor Guard of the cangaceira and who appears in Benjamin Abraão's film holding some gold chains while Maria Bonita adorns herself with trancelins.

Other rumors of betrayal involving Maria Bonita, even at the time when she was married to the shoemaker Zé de Nenê, are cited in books, as is the case cited in the book by my friend Alcino Alves Costa, *Lampião Além da Versão*, page 133, which says, in a certain excerpt: "...There is a fair, with a fabric trade, in Santa Brígida, one of the descendants of the traditional Carvalho family, from Serra Negra. He is a young man who years later became the famous and feared Lieutenant João Maria de Carvalho". The future Queen of Cangaço begins a romance with the helpful shopkeeper who would later become the great patriarch of those hinterlands. Ardent romance. "Highly confidential. So confidential that it is still denied by his family today. Maria Déa throws herself into her lover's arms. João Maria is the exact opposite of her husband. He is explosive, ardent, affectionate, and bold, he leaves the girl in complete happiness..."

In another book by Alcino, entitled *Sertão de Lampião*, Alcino says that he obtained the information above from a former soldier, a police officer who was behind Zé Rufino and on page 114 comes the testimony of Lindoaldo Alves de Oliveira, former mayor of Santa Brígida, disagreeing with this story, as she met Zé de Nenê and they were many friends and if this rumor were true, everyone in the region would know about it.

Another article that was quite widespread was that Maria had betrayed Lampião with the bandit Luiz Pedro, precisely the King of Cangaço's greatest friend, the man who swore allegiance to his friend and only separated from him when he died in Grota do Angico. This article

of betrayal was printed in the “Informativo Xingó”, year 10, number X, November 1999. The article is by Miguel Ângelo de Alencar, researcher at AT Aquicultura. Below is the article in full:

Mr Moisés Tambanque's canoe (Teresa Góes) was traveling up the São Francisco River, loaded with supplies for Chiquinho Rodrigues' warehouse, when on the bank, a man beckoned, asking him to take it. Responding to the call, Mr Moisés pulls over the canoe and at that moment he is surprised by Lampião and Maria Bonita, accompanied by seventeen cangaceiros who order them to turn around and go down the river.

Seu Moisés, an experienced canoeist, knew that the fact that his canoe was going down the river, when it had just gone up and was still loaded with cangaceiro, would certainly attract the attention of riverside dwellers, who could alert the police, causing a possible shootout that would put everyone's life in danger, including yours. He then decided to ask Lampião for his men to sit on the ballast, so that they would not be seen, and was promptly attended to. Maria Bonita was housed in the awning and Lampião stayed with his men and passengers.

Moses, needing some ropes that were on the awning, asked permission to enter there, and was answered. When Mr Moisés pushes the door open, here's the surprise: Luiz Pedro was giving Maria Bonita a passionate kiss on the mouth. Mr Moisés, pretending not to see anything, grabs his ropes and sneaks away.

At a certain point, Lampião notices the presence of a beautiful saxophone, and asks who it belongs to, being answered by Walter, a first-class player, who was heading to Pão de Açúcar where he would play the carnival. Lampião asked him to play, and was promptly obliged with a tango that he was very pleased with, asking for it to be repeated. Walter plays the entire trip until they reach the Saco do Medeiro farm, neighboring the Jacobina farm, in the municipality of Gararú, in Sergipe, where Lampião ordered the attack.

At this moment, Lampião pays the saxophonist the amount of 50,000 réis for his services and his troops disembark and head back into the caatinga. “Probably happy for that moment of relaxation, and for ignoring his partner's betrayal with his trusted goat.”

This is one of the most fanciful chapters ever written about Maria Bonita. According to writer Alcino Alves Costa, who was a friend of the boatman, he gave the following testimony: Moisés Tambanque was a purebred riverside worker, born and raised in the village of Curralinho, today the municipality of Poço Redondo, Sergipe. Curralinho, Capoeira, his land on the banks of the São Francisco River and the Tereza Góes canoe were Moisés' life. There he saw his children grow up and, already reaching their age, he left his village, his land, his canoe and headed for the distant lands of Juazeiro da Bahia. His children and descendants, still residing in Curralinho and Poço Redondo, do not remember having heard anything from the old patriarch in reference to this event.

Those who spent so much time with their father and friends, accustomed to talking about their day-to-day adventures in Rio, confirm that this is an untrue fact.

## 2.9 BEAUTIFUL MARY, CHILD, GIRL, WOMAN, LIFE, TRACED PATHS AND THE LAST ACT OF A TROUBLED LIFE

She was born a girl, a little child, just like everyone else when they are born and we are not born with stigmas, nor does time bring deformities that lead us to be bandits or heroes, it is not a natural rule to follow sides, it is natural to love all things, defending ourselves from dangers and following directions, although modern societies have created laws and guidelines.

Unconsciously we search for something unknown, reflections of the senses generated by nature itself, defenses arising from fears of the unknown. Humanity in its basic principles born in the cradle of life restricts us to its circumstances.

Maria Gomes de Oliveira came into the world as a child, she was a child, she played at being a child, she had dolls, she played house, she learned while being a child. Time transformed her into a woman, she grew into a woman, she was a woman. She met people, had friends, discovered loves, flavors, words. She missed, dreamed, cried, ran, got tired, bled, smiled, loved. She saw places, colors, got emotional, sang, decorated herself, ironed, sewed, embroidered, worshiped, prayed, walked. She picked flowers, took showers in the rain and bathed in the mud, enjoyed the dew, trimmed water in her toes, filled pots, lit lamps, felt the heat of a scorching sun, sweated. She enjoyed the birds and their songs, followed butterflies, collected firewood, lit a fire, cooked, put out flames. She felt pain, perhaps more than many of her generation. She forgave, consoled. She looked from the window, saw sorrel that flew on the endless paths, followed paths with almost no return. She lived moments, many moments, walked many leagues, several tyrants, was afraid, got pregnant, had children, in the wild bushes of the caatinga. She became intoxicated with the aromas of the country fauna, unique fragrances. She was injured, by so many thorns, streams of blood staining her skin, her dark, dark skin so beautiful. She healed wounds, created scars. She missed her, much more than anyone else. Time punished, distance did to life what it does to flowers, it dries them out. Did she fall injured, in agony, saw death coming, the sentence of the just or the unjust? Final moment, life is gone. Heads exposed, bodies without heads, lost. The end.

He was a child once, he loved like a child, he learned as a child. She was a woman and as such she experienced the flavors and pains of the world. She had friends, mother, father and brothers. She crawled, walked, ran, walked the roads, loved, got emotional, cried, suffered, just like the rest of us, how life is supposed to be, life is like that (Lima, 2005).

Maria Bonita and Lampião died on July 28, 1938, in Grota do Angico, in Poço Redondo, Sergipe, attacked by Sergeant Aniceto, midshipman Chico Ferreira and the general commander of the attack, Lieutenant João Bezerra. According to some reports, she was beheaded while still alive. She lived next to Lampião for almost ten years, from 1929 to 1938, following a life of constant hustle and bustle. They had four children, two of whom were stillborn.

After the deaths of the cangaceiros, the heads were displayed as trophies and went around several cities and were shown to the population. Some time later, the heads remained at the Nina Rodrigues Institute, in Salvador, Bahia, where after a long legal fight, they were buried.

On January 13, 1969, governor Luis Vianna Filho signed an action authorizing the burial of the heads of the cangaceiros. The final act of burial of the heads took place on February 13, 1969.

Medical-legal examination of Maria Bonita's head:

(following the original spelling)

"Maria Bonita's head was admitted at 10 pm on July 31, 1938 at the Legal Medical Service of the State of Alagoas, in a poor state of conservation, which is why the brain was not removed, already reduced to a whitish and amorphous paste which drained through the occipital orifice. The infiltrated soft parts did not allow the physiognomic features of Lampião's companion to be better appreciated, which, in fact, did not seem to belie the nickname given to her. She appeared to be a woman of thirty, thirty-five years old. At first impression, what most attracts attention when seeing her is her high and completely vertical forehead. Black hair, long, thin and straight, arranged in a hanging braid. She has a light brown complexion. It can be included in the group of Brazilian xanthoderms in the Roquette-Pinto classification. Head circumference is 57 centimeters. Maximum transverse diameter measures 150 millimeters. Cephalic index, 32. Therefore bracycephala. The total length of the face reaches 190 millimeters. The total length of the face is 120 millimeters. The single face length is 72 millimeters. Bizygomatic or maximum transverse diameter of the face: 153 millimeters. Partial drill index: 47.0. Nose with a thick, blunt apex, somewhat flattened, measures 50 centimeters in height and has a maximum width of 35 millimeters. Transverse nasal index is 70. Therefore, mesorrhina. Symmetrical ears, with a total length of 50 millimeters and a maximum width of 40. Topinard auricular index: 80. Thick lips, with a mouth cavity measuring 45 millimeters. Small teeth, well planted and in excellent condition. The width of the palpebral fissure is 40 millimeters, eyes are dark brown.

These are the main elements collected to outline the anthropological profile of Maria Bonita. They do not denounce the existence of any stigmas of degeneration or atavistic signs. In the search for her delinquent constitution, the psychological study that would make it possible to highlight the fundamental characteristics of her personality would be much more important. In truth, a definitive and safe conclusion could only be drawn from the physiopsychical and biographical assessment of the victim, the only means capable of revealing his criminal tendencies even if they were aroused by passion and love.

Maceió, August 3, 1938

Dr. José Lages Filho, coroner.

Source: Alagoas newspaper, edition of August 4, 1938.

## 2.10 FOR A MATTER OF GENDER: A FEMININE TOUCH IN THE HEART OF CANGAÇO

The woman who in the Republic already had a differentiated role in society broke parameters and barriers also imposed in an archaic northeast when in the 1930s, in the Sertão weakened by lack of public policies, they joined the cangaço, breaking conventions, leading actions, causing the touch of gender to achieve equality, made themselves visible and influenced hearts, in the harshness of a time and even before chanting achievements, many fell with the cruel blade of cowardice.

To understand some social issues that involve the feminine and masculine, or the relationships built in society around men and women, it is necessary to refer to gender issues. The values of public spheres such as work, politics, education, construction of knowledge, among others. In the private sphere, such as love, hate, sexuality, marriage, family, friendship, they continue to institute behaviors differentiated by sex. Therefore, feminism understands that it is these values that bring harm to the construction of equity between men and women for the transformation of society.

The concept of gender is created in different ways, depending on the environment in which it is adjusted. Thus, its use undergoes ideological adaptations, which in many cases reduce its political content and its potential for transforming power relations. Joan Scott (1995) in an article published by SOS Corpo (Feminist Organization) defines: Gender is a constitutive element of social relations, based on the perceived differences between the sexes. Gender is the first way to signify power relations.

Therefore, gender is a relational concept, elaborated by feminist theory, useful for understanding society in power relations, corroborates Cristina Buarque (2006).

The construction of social relationships between people and nature and the development of each society gradually builds the cultures of people. Based on these cultures, we see that men and women change roles, depending on the context they are inserted in and the historical moment they are experiencing.

Understanding gender as socially constructed relations, that is, human beings as they are shaped, constructed and culturally recognized, the constitution

gender occurs in everyday life and shapes a model of man and woman that is presented to you based on the definition of social roles. Hence what is learned becomes “natural”: the superiority of men and the subordination of women. From this point on, stereotypes began to be standardized in unequal relationships.

This state of “naturalization” has become quite accentuated in the Sertão, because of a dominant model and in all life activities the privileged situation of men and the discrimination of women appear as something independent of the will of each person, brought into law, customs and structures.

### **3 MATERIAL AND METHODS**

Field research was carried out through interviews and documentary consultations in the region that comprises the Bahian cities of Paulo Afonso, Glória, Rodelas, Macururé, Chorrochó, Canudos, Jeremoabo and Santa Brígida. Testimonies were collected from the remains, photographs and documents relating to the history.

### **4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the reports in cangaço anthologies, it is perfectly possible to observe from a gender perspective this construction of men and women and their cultural transformations in a scenario of adversity in the Sertão of the Northeast, in the middle of the caatinga there is a curious protagonism of women in cangaço.

Simone de Beauvoir (1974) emphasizes in a feminist conception of gender that: Every human being is born male or female (sex), but becomes man or woman (gender): “One is not born a woman, one becomes a woman”. This social construction of gender is also carried out in the cangaço movement. Women, from feminine, became, within a gender conception, women.

The Sertão of northeastern Brazil has historically been marked in its vital structure. Punished by natural droughts and unequal surroundings, neglectful policies were responsible for deepening poverty and reproducing differences in social relations and structural powers. But it also gave space to the logic of contradiction, which made it possible to

organization of affected populations, mobilization, their high protection or even their demand for support measures.

As the protagonism of women is forgotten by history, it is fair, among so many prominent women in the world, to consider the women of cangaço. Why not?

Among the controversies of history, a Cangaço Movement was built, determined according to numerous writings, between a mix of vigilantes and bandits. Faced with the absolutism of the colonels, in such an adverse country scenario, the secondary role of women gives way to an attitude towards survival in just hope. Women and men as collective subjects, assume similar roles in the cangaço trajectory.

Poverty and exclusion are phenomena that affect men and women differently. For women, the reality of need is even worse, as they are tasked by patriarchal inheritance with carrying out tasks that are mostly dependent on male provision to support the family.

This time, in a preconceived view, the leading role of women deep in the caatingas, in the middle of the Sertão, exercising the feared cangaceiras, seems inappropriate. These women, from feminine, became women of affront, even with quarrels, the anticulture of dominance and gender violence.

The condition of women's subalternity has been explained by different studies, in different areas of knowledge. But it is based on this conception that the protagonism of women in cangaço is revealed, in the family breakdown, in the fascination of the gangs, in the hardships of time, in the luck that escaped them and in the roles that society imposed on them, they starred in scenarios.

Historically, women have been objectified, raped, attacked, subjugated and oppressed. Oppression "blocks people's ability to find ways to change the world and themselves, so that the oppressed may not even see their oppression" (BEAUVOIR, 2000).

The cangaço women sought other paths, stood out, transformed from females into women in the cangaço condition. They imposed their own identity, unique personalities. They were persecuted, faced power structures, created survival strategies, influenced attitudes, dictated rules and became feared cangaceiras in the controversial world of cangaço men. In this inclusion, people from

cangaço build new gender relations, which allows us to observe a new culture and redefine new bonds.

It was from this scene of women's entry into the cangaço that a new facet of the Northeastern woman became evident. She transposed the current codes, circumvented family rules, invested in a page to be written without weighing its consequences.

## CONCLUSION

The opening of the cangaço to women changed the masculine order and integrated the movement's support as a disorder of signs and senses. A new loving warrior economy has been established. Women, unparalleled knowledge of the feminine in the masculine, will impose a praxis, a loving accounting in which the ideal of life will prevail, replacing the specter of death, a spectacle of violence without purpose, without direction. Like the men, they knew that cangaço was not a game or a pastime; They believed, however, in the possibility of building life from death. It was as if, from now on, death was calculated, thought out; death as a product of the culture of honor and not a schizophrenic movement of violence emptied of content, a desperate violence.

Unlike men's violence, women seemed to opt for aggression, as an action and reaction movement, a necessary lever for the subjects' autonomy - positive violence, who knows? - producer of new concepts, new knowledge, in a new society.

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